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ABSTRACT

The Minnesota Department of Education has created a plan, "Unlearning Violence," to aid schools and communities in their efforts to create safe and nurturing environments for all the state's children. The goals and challenges of this plan were formulated with the involvement of over 600 citizens and an in-depth study of research related to violence prevention. Seven goals for violence prevention are articulated: (1) Promotion: Develop the qualities children need to thrive; (2) Prevention: Create comprehensive prevention efforts for all learners; (3) Protection: Assure the protection of all K-12 students and staff; (4) Family Partnerships: Strengthen the school/parent/guardian educational connection; (5) Healthy Climates: Provide positive school climates, environments, and cultures in which to work and learn; (6) Community Focus: Assure a community focus to promotion and prevention efforts; and (7) Social Norms: Change social norms to emphasize acceptable ways to solve problems. When it is implemented, the plan will be assessed through existing evaluation instruments. Implementation will be aided through state technical assistance and funding through programs described. Additional Department of Education violence prevention activities and future efforts are described. An appendix describes media activity supporting the program, community models, school violence prevention efforts, and laws related to school violence. Eight resources are provided for additional information. (SLD)

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ED 401 346

Violence Prevention

Unlearning VIOLENCE

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

A VISION OF THE FUTURE 5

MOVING FROM RISK TO RESILIENCY 7

GOALS AND CHALLENGES 9

ASSESSMENTS 29

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMMING 31

APPENDIX 39

- Media Activity 39
- Community Models 41
- School Violence Prevention Efforts 43
- Laws Relating to Violence in Schools 46

ADDENDUM 47

- Additional Resources 47
- References 47

MARCH 1995

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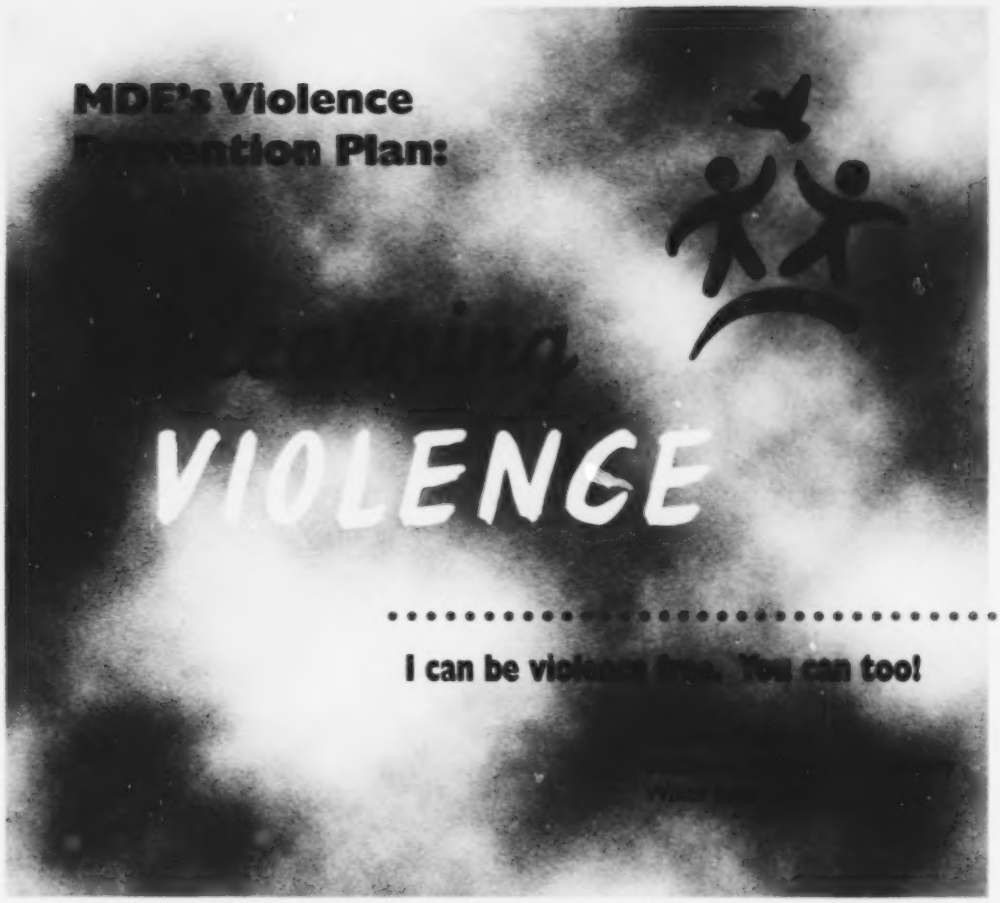

INTRODUCTION

Across the state of Minnesota, from teachers to parents to legislators, adults and children are repeating the words of 2nd grader Caroline Nebhan "I can be violence free." And throughout schools and communities, people are working together to tell each other, "You can too."

The Minnesota Department of Education has created a plan, ***Unlearning Violence,*** to aid schools and communities in their efforts to create safe and nurturing environments for all of Minnesota's children. The goals and challenges addressed in this plan were formulated with citizen involvement, as well as from an in-depth study of research relating to the issue of violence prevention.

Unlearning Violence incorporates the vision articulated in **Minnesota Milestones**, a state plan initiated by Governor Arne H. Carlson to ensure a better future for our schools and communities. "We will recognize the family in all its forms as the building block of our communities. We will be good neighbors, taking our personal and community responsibilities seriously. We will not tolerate violence but will encourage mutual respect."

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The following premises form the foundation of this plan.

COMMUNITY FOCUS

Prevention and promotion efforts must have a community focus. Community members know what their challenges are and what they have as assets to support children. Each community needs to take leadership and actively participate in their prevention/promotion activity.

LONGTERM AND LIFELONG COMMITMENT

Prevention and promotion efforts, like all learning, can and should continue throughout the lifespan. Prevention is not a quick-fix—one show, one video, one curriculum—it is multifaceted. Children grow into adults who then must make safe, nurturing and educated choices for their children and communities.

UNDERSTAND THE CONNECTION

Social problems are inter-related and contribute to violence. Any effort to prevent violence must recognize and address the connections between: racism, poverty, chemical abuse and dependency, teen pregnancy, violence, bullying, sexual harassment, lack of information about sexual health, anger management, dating violence, violence in the media, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, HIV/AIDS, prostitution, gangs, weapons, the need for conflict resolution skills, and other problems.

VIOLENCE IS NOT ACCEPTABLE

Consequences for violent behavior must be clear and consistently enforced, but only applying punishments for violence without teaching alternatives will not change behavior, and may exacerbate the actions that we want to stop. Violence is a learned behavior not to be tolerated in any form from children or adults. Learned behaviors can be unlearned and alternatives can be taught.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Public health campaigns to stop smoking, stop drinking and driving or to use seat belts altered public opinion and the same efforts could change perceptions about violence. Public health data collection systems are essential to understanding the effect of violence on health. A public health approach to violence prevention is critical.

ACADEMICS AND SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL NEEDS

Communities in Minnesota have experienced demographic and economic changes in the last decade. These changes are reflected in the needs of our children. Schools can no longer choose between academics and social/emotional issues. We must recognize that children behave better and are more ready to learn when their personal needs are met. It is hard to concentrate on a subject such as math when you are afraid to go out for recess for fear of being bullied, or if you fear for your mom's safety, or if your family is homeless.

RACISM AND DIVERSITY

Violence can be individual and it can be institutional. Racism, with its insidious ability to chip away at a person's sense of self, hope and meaning, is violence. A child with a strong cultural identity is less likely to engage in at-risk behaviors. Diversity that is understood, celebrated and embraced can be the strength of a community.

CHILD ABUSE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

When children are victims of abuse or witness to it, the violence can have immediate and long term affects. They learn violence is acceptable even in our most intimate relationships and may start to imitate violent behaviors at very young ages.

SOCIALIZATION

Children learn appropriate and inappropriate behaviors in a variety of settings. Therefore, families, schools, faith communities, organized sports, and the media all can either perpetuate violence or help to build children's assets through role modeling and promoting positive youth development. Adults need to be more involved in children's and adolescents' lives; the ability of adults to connect with children is critical for children to learn to attach with others and for violence prevention.

COORDINATION AND IDENTIFICATION OF EXISTING SERVICES

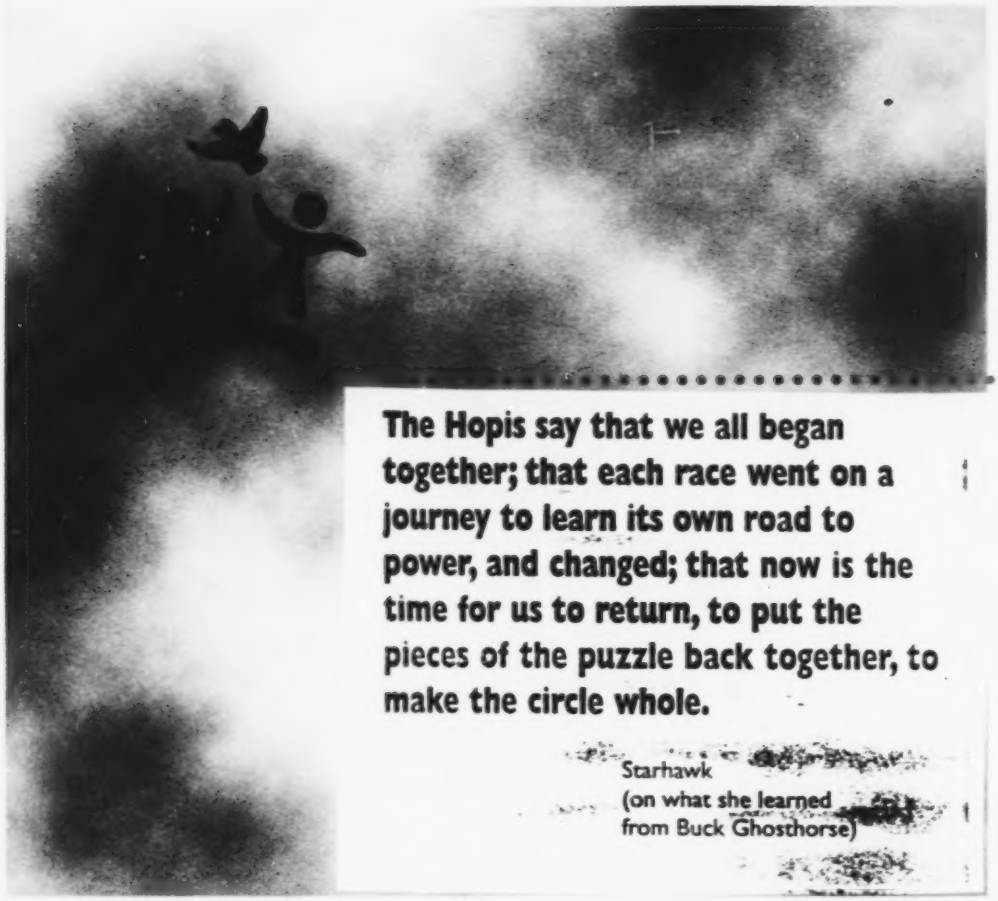
At the state and local level we need better coordination between services. Those providing services need to know how they inter-relate and work with other services. Services should be well publicized so that citizens can identify programs without having to be referred by a helping professional.

IT'S UP TO EACH OF US

Each adult who comes into contact with a child has the potential of contributing to a child's emotional and psychological development. Many families do the best they can, but children also are deeply influenced by other sources of socialization such as peers, the media, and sports. It is imperative that individuals reach out to all children, including those who may be "at risk." All children need bonding opportunities with caring adults. All adults in the community need to take responsibility for children and adolescents.

The big challenge is going to be for communities to cut across the lines of diversity and the lines of discipline in order to bring people together.

Janet Reno
U.S. Attorney General



The Hopis say that we all began together; that each race went on a journey to learn its own road to power, and changed; that now is the time for us to return, to put the pieces of the puzzle back together, to make the circle whole.

Starhawk
(on what she learned from Buck Ghosthorse)

A VISION OF THE FUTURE

In the year 2005 schools will be an integral member of the community where everyone works together in support of children and families. Schools are viewed by students, parents and the community as friendly, accessible and a vibrant component of the social fabric. Truancy is minimal and graduation rates are high because children want to attend school and everyone strives to make it a successful experience.

Parents are actively involved in their children's education and their schools' success and view their participation as crucial and rewarding. Children who are economically disadvantaged or advantaged, male or female, from any race or culture, physically or mentally challenged, feel they belong and have caring relationships with significant adults in the school and with other students. There are plenty of opportunities for students to be actively involved in their education and skill development.

All students and staff feel respected and the climate and culture of the educational centers is drug free and safe from any form of violence. Children learn non-violent ways to settle differences and peaceful conflict resolution is the

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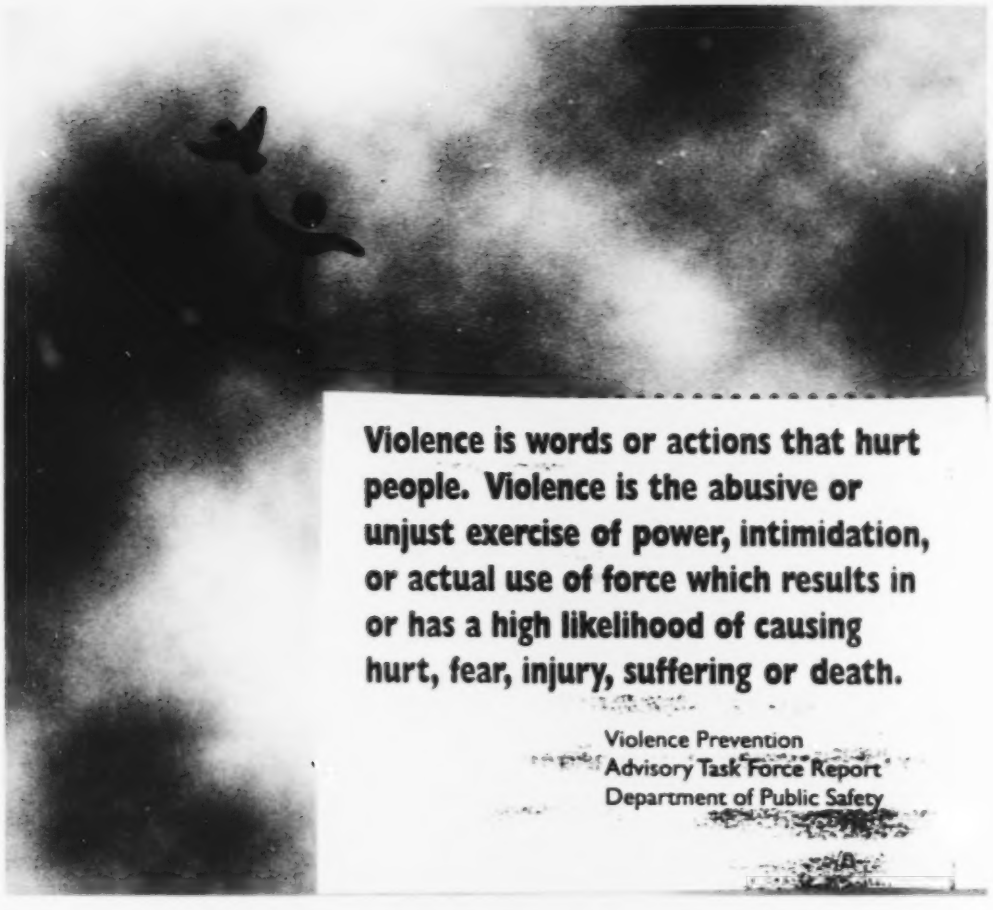
norm. After reinforcing this learning for 12 school years, each child has the skills to be a peacemaker. Schools are the pride of most communities and independent of the economy of the area as everyone is committed to children receiving the academic, social and emotional support they need. Adults from every aspect of the community are a rich resource in both academic assistance and after school programs. From school and community mentors, children learn about the rapidly changing technology and gain the skills they need for healthy relationships, employment and/or post secondary education.

Every student is part of at least one extra-curricular activity, and the energy and excitement in the 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. activities that are part of the school day reinforce the core values of respect and dignity, equality, and being of service to others. These values are integrated in the curricula as part of the culture of the school.



Violence is words or actions that hurt people. Violence is the abusive or unjust exercise of power, intimidation, or actual use of force which results in or has a high likelihood of causing hurt, fear, injury, suffering or death.

Violence Prevention
Advisory Task Force Report
Department of Public Safety

MOVING FROM RISK TO RESILIENCY

One of the first challenges we face when attempting to eliminate violence is in defining it. While acts of physical violence are easily identified, psychological hurt and intimidation are also harmful, and may leave deep emotional and psychological scars that take a lifetime to heal. These can often set the stage for the occurrence of physical violence. Non-physical types of violence cannot be overlooked or we perpetuate an attitude that says it is okay to mistreat and violate others as long as there are no bruises, blood or physical injury.

Violence is a learned behavior. It can be unlearned.

A child's risk for violence or resiliency to violent behavior begins with his/her primary relationships, and is affected by societal factors. Societal factors

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resiliency: success in the face of great odds; the ability to rise above significant risk factors to form relationships, be competent in school or at a job and feel good about oneself.

include economics, media, alcohol and other drugs, oppression, guns, and community deterioration.

Children learn from what they see modeled and this includes how they view people dealing with conflict and rage. The first place children learn to give and receive love, how to deal with their anger, solve problems and express emotions is in the family. The influences, positive and negative, of parents, siblings and extended family members on children cannot be emphasized enough.

All violence prevention efforts must include an awareness and acknowledgement of the opportunity for families to be powerful partners or negative role models in the development of children. All efforts to teach and encourage positive parenting, to support families in all their configurations and to hold accountable those members of families who physically, sexually, or emotionally abuse or neglect children is, at its core, violence prevention.

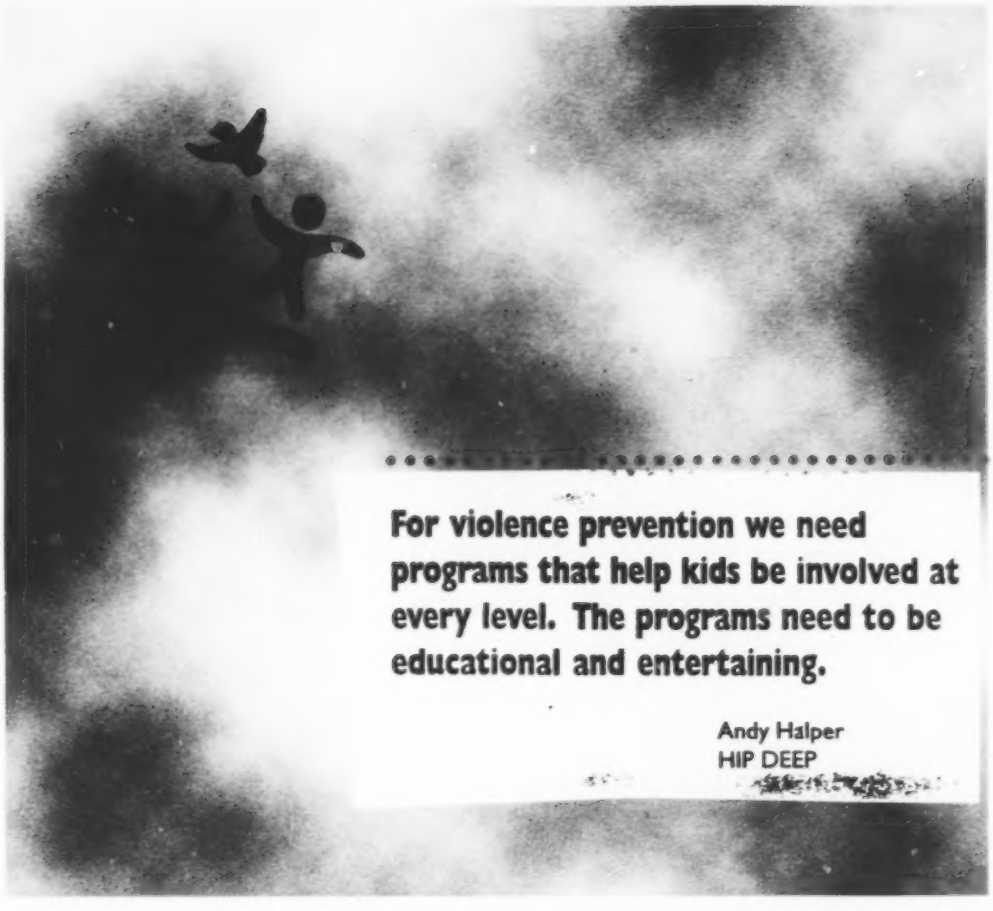
Children who witness violence in their families are also deeply affected. Therefore efforts to intervene in and prevent domestic violence are critical to violence prevention.

But instead of asking the question, "what causes violence," several researchers have asked "why are some children not violent?" How do children survive inadequate parenting or poverty or prejudice and discrimination and grow to be healthy, caring adults? Studies about resilience by Pitman,[1] Masten,[2] Resnick,[3] Hawkins,[4] Benson,[5] Gilgun[6] and others identify protective factors or assets that children have that helps in the positive development of the child. Benson, for instance, identified 30 assets, both internal (self) and external (from parents and community) that aid adolescents in their development. Resnick shows the importance of a caring connection with family and other adults (parents of friends) as well as a positive body image. Martha Farrell Erickson's[7] research focuses on the importance of relationships with supportive, caring adults, particularly early attachments, as the primary factor of resiliency in children. ([1-7] See References on page 47.)

By building on assets, strengths or protective factors of positive development for all youth, a family, school and community can counteract the destructive factors contributing to violence.

The adults in our churches made children feel valued and important. They took time and paid attention to us. And while life was often hard, and resources scarce, we always knew who we were and that the measure of our worth was inside our heads and hearts and not outside in our possessions or on our backs.

Marian Wright Edelman
Children's Defense Fund



For violence prevention we need programs that help kids be involved at every level. The programs need to be educational and entertaining.

Andy Halper
HIP DEEP

GOALS AND CHALLENGES

This violence prevention plan, ***Unlearning Violence***, was formulated through focus groups, and face to face or phone interviews with over 600 Minnesota citizens who have played active roles in the violence prevention movement. Information was also gathered through a literature review of current research on violence prevention and promotion. As we interviewed people, one of the most common concerns expressed was the need for more coordination between the various efforts to prevent violence and to increase access to information about existing resources. To that end, while developing this report, we coordinated and shared information and resources with the Department of Public Safety, the League of Women Voters, and **Minnesota Monthly Magazine**.

Under the 1994 Safe & Drug Free Schools & Communities Act, Minnesota is required to set forth a comprehensive plan for drug and violence prevention. The plan is to include measurable goals for prevention and to publicize the progress towards achieving those goals. The 1994 Strategic Budget of the State of Minnesota for Children & Family Services calls for all learning to be

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"provided in environments which are safe, accessible and violence-free, are conducive to learning and delivered so that learners and their families will have efficient access to programs and services of all agencies." This plan is designed to meet the federal and state requirements for violence prevention programs. We hope this plan will help school districts enact similar goals locally, and inspire communities in their prevention efforts.

This document addresses several of the challenges we face in reducing, and in hope of one day eliminating, violence in our schools and communities. We present seven goals to be reached that will make a positive impact on the problems we face today.

1. **PROMOTION: DEVELOP THE QUALITIES CHILDREN NEED TO THRIVE**

2. **PREVENTION: CREATE COMPREHENSIVE PREVENTION EFFORTS FOR ALL LEARNERS**

3. **PROTECTION: ASSURE THE PROTECTION OF ALL K-12 STUDENTS AND STAFF**

4. **FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS: STRENGTHEN THE SCHOOL/ PARENT/GUARDIAN EDUCATIONAL CONNECTION**

5. **HEALTHY CLIMATES: PROVIDE POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATES, ENVIRONMENTS AND CULTURES IN WHICH TO WORK AND LEARN**

6. **COMMUNITY FOCUS: ASSURE A COMMUNITY FOCUS TO PROMOTION AND PREVENTION EFFORTS**

7. **SOCIAL NORMS: CHANGE SOCIAL NORMS TO EMPHASIZE ACCEPTABLE WAYS TO SOLVE PROBLEMS**

In order to create schools and communities that foster the emotional well being of all members of our society, we need to acknowledge our differences, identify common goals and join together to actively address these problems.

Prevention is involving youth in positive programming and giving them a place to go and people to be with.

Mary Jo Becker
Boys and Girls Club

GOAL ONE

Promotion: Develop the qualities children need to thrive.

1. *Challenge: Help people identify the benefits of promotion initiatives*
   a. Acquaint staff with promotion research
   b. Identify actions that staff, parents and community members can take to increase the strengths, assets and protective factors of young people
   c. Identify risk factors in a community that may lead to violent behavior, drug abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school problems and unsafe sexual activity

2. *Challenge: Concentrate on positive activities, not on the fear of violence*
   a. Communicate to parents and students when positive behavior and activities occur
   b. Confront the fear of violence which often limits or deters positive actions
   c. Focus primarily on promotion and prevention services, secondarily on increasing metal detectors and adding law enforcement officers, and not on increasing prison sentences and building prisons

promotion: to further the progress for growth of: advance *(Webster)* Develop the qualities children need to thrive. Encourage the development of assets, strengths or protective factors in all children.

There's a shortage of adults in all areas to be involved with the kids. We're doing collaborations to develop networks after schools...libraries, recreations, parks, etc. Kids need more options for programming, not just hanging out.

Belinda Davis
YMAP
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

3. *Challenge: Encourage adults to serve as appropriate role models for children and youth*

   a. Expect adults to set boundaries, structure and consequences for inappropriate behavior

   b. Recognize that role modeling occurs on a societal level. When politicians, school board members and powerful people in leadership positions deal with their conflicts by degrading, blaming, and belittling each other, they are not serving as positive examples of respectful conflict resolution

   c. Communicate to adults their responsibility to model appropriate behavior and provide guidance and structure for children and youth

   d. Allow for nurturing, caring, and appropriate touch between adults and children

4. *Challenge: Increase students' strengths, assets and protective factors*

   a. Promote a commitment to education

   b. Enhance self-esteem through affirmation and shame reduction as well as through learning new skills and being of service to others

   c. Teach parenting and child development to adolescents

   d. Promote identification and appreciation of each person's unique skills, talents and culture

   e. Promote development of positive body image (gender, race, culture, body type, physical abilities)

   f. Promote the ability to develop and maintain healthy relationships (friends, relatives, intimates)

   g. Involve students and respect their opinions: encourage students to be advisors, task force members, and active group participants

   h. Promote identification and development of leadership skills

   i. Promote involvement of students in at least one extra-curricular activity

   j. Develop mentoring programs so that students may have access to positive adult role models

life skills: proficiency or ability in handling the challenges of living. An ability that can be used throughout life such as interpersonal skills, getting a job or maintaining healthy relationship. Example: negotiation is a skill that can help avoid fights and potentially life threatening situations, and it can be used through all stages of life.

I'm really glad I went to South High. I got the educational preparation I needed to be in here (Harvard) and the diversity of South High and the quality of teachers was just amazing. It's an experience not a lot of people at Harvard have had. South definitely has the same problems as a lot of public high schools - gangs and drugs and whatever. But I never felt in danger or that it was an unpleasant experience.

Maria Kaibel
South High and Harvard graduate
1994 Rhodes Scholarship recipient

GOAL TWO

Prevention: Create comprehensive prevention efforts for all learners.

1. *Challenge: Increase knowledge of violence prevention skills and the unacceptibility of violence*
   a. Teach children and adults about violence and its effects
   b. Teach peaceful ways to resolve problems
   c. Teach nonviolent ways to identify and express feelings, wants and needs, and to accept rejection
   d. Develop the ability to peacefully resolve conflict - conflict resolution, mediation, arbitration, restorative intervention and reintegration
   e. Teach the identification of and appropriate responses to anger
   f. Teach refusal and resistance skills
   g. Teach the emotional, social, health and legal consequences of acts of violence (including emotional, physical and sexual violence or violence based on race, class, age, gender and

sexual orientation) and its impact on victims/survivors, perpetrators and community

h. Provide formal instruction on ethics

i. Train staff to de-escalate conflict or call for help when needed and use restorative interventions instead of shaming, intimidating or physically forceful methods of intervention

j. Assure these values and standards are implemented in the sports programs

2. Challenge: Integrate pro-social, violence prevention lifeskills across the curriculum

pro-social skills: knowledge, attitudes and behaviors that promote civilized, socially acceptable and peaceful values including anger management, non-shaming communication, problem solving, conflict management, mediation and the use of resources.

a. Identify curriculum that promotes pro-social attitudes and values: self-respect, respect for others, personal accountability, equality, positive citizenship, and a sense of justice, hope and meaning

b. Select appropriate supplements such as topic specific lessons, videos, theatrical presentations and speakers

c. Coordinate training and teaching efforts with local resources such as shelters, sexual assault centers, educational theater companies, and peer educators

d. Coordinate the chemical health & violence prevention initiatives

e. Use the arts as an educational tool and to develop assets

f. Teach positive/healthy sexuality

Arts are not just for arts sake, they should be for kids sake. They can teach kids teamwork, conflict resolution, their own ability to learn a lot, how to build community - by being actively involved in an arts program.

Bobby Hickman
The City, Inc.

3. *Challenge: Understand that violence is a public health issue*

   a. Involve all aspects of the community in needs assessment and joint problem solving on issues related to the full continuum of violence and violence prevention

   b. Understand that interventions geared toward changing individual behavior, although badly needed, will not be enough to change the current outcomes of violence without community based interventions

   c. Utilize a public health framework of prevention

      1) Use primary prevention strategies such as education of all toward nonviolent personal behavior norms

      2) Use secondary prevention strategies of early intervention by educating individuals and communities about how to intervene across a continuum of violence

      3) Use a tertiary approach for limiting the effects of extreme violence by referring students for treatment and advocating for adequate community treatment resources

   d. Know and use local indicators of violence, such as juvenile arrests, gun incidents in schools and students who report observing or committing violent acts

4. *Challenge: Improve the ability to address the health, social and emotional problems of children*

   a. Provide and/or expand counseling, support and referral services for students and their families

   b. Coordinate with community agencies so they can provide mental health, intervention and treatment services

   c. Improve collaboration and cooperation between agencies and schools to ensure that students receive the help they need for problems that impede learning

   d. Be prepared to offer crisis assistance to secondary victims of violence

   e. Train staff to increase their own inventory of skills to deal with behavioral problems

5. Challenge: Take bullying behavior seriously

a. Recognize bullying as a form of violence that will not be condoned

b. Identify and intervene at the earliest stages of bullying, aggressive and assaultive behavior, in order to break the development of violent behavior

c. Train staff and students on using interventions and alternative behavior when bullying occurs

d. Differentiate between bullying and annoying, bickering and bossing behaviors

e. Provide clear consequences for children who bully

f. Follow-up with restorative interventions to ensure that the behavior does not continue

intervention: to enter or come between so as to modify *(Webster)*. To interrupt behaviors and provide help to positively change behaviors.

We need alternative models of education and healing for children of color that they will feel comfortable with.

Jettie Ann Hill
Ombudsperson for African American Families

6. Challenge: Increase awareness of the link between violence and alcohol and other drug abuse

a. Merge violence prevention education with alcohol and other drug abuse prevention education

b. Assess violent students for alcohol and other drug abuse and recommend for intervention and treatment

c. Use accurate information on the relationship between alcohol and other drugs and violence in curricula and policy development

7. Challenge: Keep options open for students who need alternative schools

a. Adapt to students' varied learning styles, cultural needs and behavioral patterns

b. Take the stigma away from alternative learning centers (ALC)

c. Do not portray ALC students negatively to the mainstream educational community

Youth with disabilities are involved in the juvenile justice system. Where are they ending up? What assessment is going on? What if the behavior going on is characteristic of the disability but no one knows?

Deb Jones
PACER

8. Challenge: Use appropriate educational options to assist children with special needs

   a. Use fair, appropriate and thorough assessment procedures prior to EBD placement

   b. Ensure necessary resources go to both special education and general education

   c. Increase collaboration and cooperation between general education, special education and alternative schools to effectively deal with children's varying emotional needs and behavioral problems

   d. Adopt programming to educate all students in a diverse population so that every child may succeed

9. *Challenge: Eliminate truancy and help students who are out of school to return*

   a. Identify and integrate into the school environment out of school youth, whether they are truant, homeless, runaway, dropouts or teen parents

   b. Coordinate and collaborate with agencies in the community that serve these populations

   c. Make schools a positive and healthy place that welcomes students with differing learning styles and varied social and emotional needs

GOAL THREE

Protection: Assure the protection of all K-12 students and staff.

1. *Challenge: Maintain a healthy, positive school climate that does not condone violence in any way*
   a. Communicate clear rules against and consequences for violent behavior
   b. Maintain consistent and reasonable expectations for all
   c. Establish a discipline plan where punishment is a last resort after all attempts at conflict resolution, mediation, arbitration and restorative interventions have failed
   d. Teach the entire staff conflict resolution and mediation skills
   e. Be prepared for crisis—have a plan for security and follow-up in terms of emotional support (grief, loss, anger management, revenge)

While the large majority of students and teachers feel safe and have not been personally involved in a violent incident in and around their schools, teacher and student experiences and perceptions frequently differ, with students seeing and fearing violence more than do teachers.

1993 Violence in America's Public Schools
The American Teacher

2. *Challenge: Adopt short-term and long-term safety measures to eliminate violent behaviors and attitudes*

   a. To solve conflict in the short-term, emphasize conflict resolution, peer mediation, arbitration and restorative interventions

   b. To create long-term solutions, clearly identify methods to change attitudes and behaviors so that schools are safe

   c. Use liaison officers for a variety of safety measures, including building caring and trusting relationships between students and adults

   d. As a short-term measure, consider the pros and cons of bus cameras, metal detectors and increasing the presence of law enforcement

3. *Challenge: Review and enhance security measures*

   a. Develop a plan to maintain security during school hours and provide after hours security when facilities are used for community activities by staff, students and visitors

   b. Greet all visitors and escort them to their destination in the building

   c. Designate as entrances, doors that are easily monitored and have all other doors designated as exit only doors

   d. Require photo identification for all permanent and temporary staff

   e. Require identification badges for all visitors

   f. Offer personal safety/self-defense training for students

   g. Develop a plan for how to deal with the media in the event of a crisis

   h. Review lighting needs in facilities, parking lots and surrounding grounds

   i. Review facility variables such as traffic flow, layout, colors and music

restorative interventions: a process by which violators are given an opportunity to make amends to victims, whether individuals, schools or communities; victims are given the opportunity to express feelings and describe their needs to the offender; and damage to the school or community is acknowledged and restitution made.

The world is so mean for our children, we can't let them slip away when we've got their attention.

Larry Wesley
Catholic Charities

4. *Challenge: Increase emotional and physical safety on school buses*

   a. Establish and communicate clear rules and behavioral expectations for students

   b. Train all drivers to report violations and to equally enforce all rules

   c. Seek caring adults to be bus stop greeters and to ride along with students

5. *Challenge: Maintain no tolerance for weapons in the hands of children*

   a. Accurately document and report all weapons violations

   b. Teach children what to do when they see a weapon and to report guns and other weapons to teachers and/or administrators

   c. Challenge attitudes that perpetuate the notion that weapons, particularly guns, are a sign of strength and power, or a way to deal with conflict

   d. Support students so they do not believe the only way for them to be protected and safe is to carry a weapon

6. *Challenge: Protect all from hate crimes*

   a. Ban messages, apparel, posters and language that in any way condones, encourages or tolerates the use of verbal and physical violence aimed at religion, race, culture, language, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, beliefs and gender

   b. Teach the linkages between intolerance, hate and violence

   c. Establish clear consequences for hate crimes

   d. Educate against racism and educate for inclusiveness

   e. Teach the negative impacts of sex role and racial stereotyping

Hate crimes are not just an attack on an individual but also on a group's identity, thus others who share the victim's background also feel threatened and victimized.

Morton Ryweck
League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions

GOAL FOUR

Family Partnerships: Strengthen the school/parent/guardian educational connection

1. *Challenge: Acknowledge parents' leadership role and responsibility in educating children*

   a. Assist parents/guardians to learn how to support, nurture and affirm children in a violence-free setting at home and in school

   b. Involve parents/guardians in their child's academic success

   c. Make the school a welcome environment for parents, siblings and guardians and encourage their involvement in a wide variety of ways

   d. Stay sensitive to the fact that parents/guardians may be very interested in their childs' academic success but may not be able to attend school functions due to work schedules, child care, economic stresses or language barriers

A lot of families we see do not have other supports.

Connie Skillingsted
Minneapolis Crisis Nursery

2. *Challenge: Communicate regularly with parents/guardians*

   a. Inform parents/guardians of what their children are doing right, especially their strengths as well as their needs

   b. Communicate school needs to parents through a monthly calendar of school activities

   c. Develop a parent, school resource line for more direct contact

   d. Create and coordinate opportunities for parents/guardians to serve as bus and hall monitors, mentors and helpers in the classroom

3. Challenge: Offer opportunities for parents/guardians to learn promotion/prevention techniques

a. Create "homework" designed to encourage dialogue between students and parents/guardians on critical topics

b. Inform parents/guardians of all specialized curriculum and offer opportunities for their active involvement

c. Offer opportunities for parents/guardians to learn about conflict resolution and other school promotion/prevention programs

d. Encourage parents/guardians to model respect, equity, justice and peaceful resolution of conflicts

In order to have enhanced student achievement students need a safe climate to take risks and they need to take risks if they are to learn.

Sarah Snapp
Wilder Foundation

4. Challenge: Serve as a resource to parents

a. Offer or refer parents/guardians to courses on parenting, English, GED, or to social service agencies as needed

b. Help parents/guardians understand their child's development

c. Inform parents/guardians of truancy, antisocial behavior, or problems that occur in a social or academic setting of which they may not be aware

d. Take regular attendance, and inform parents/guardians of students' absences, and identify reasons for truancy

e. Examine the issues around extending the length of the school day and/or year in ways that would fit with increasing academic and family needs

GOAL FIVE

Healthy Climates: Provide positive climates, environments and cultures.

1. *Challenge: Focus on developing a healthy climate conducive to learning*

   a. Develop a climate and culture that promotes norms of non-violence and is inclusive, respectful, and structured

   b. Develop a clear vision of promotion/prevention

   c. Encourage adults to help everyone feel a sense of belonging

   d. Reinforce the rule of treating others as you want them to treat you

   e. Encourage adults to be physically and emotionally nurturing, using appropriate and respectful touch

   f. Establish a policy of clear rules and consequences using conflict mediation and negotiation

   g. Strive for all students and families to feel included regardless of their race, culture, religion, or sexual orientation

   h. Provide celebration opportunities and rewards for those showing academic achievement and individual leadership in promotion/prevention

   i. Provide self-care training for the staff

   j. Train staff so they have better skills to be culturally sensitive

2. *Challenge: Ensure a sense of ownership and connectedness among students*

   a. Develop a school community in which all students feel connected to at least one caring adult

   b. Develop ways for regular education students to be mentors to special education students

   c. Make schools a welcoming place for students with various learning styles

   d. Recognize diversity among students and design curriculum, instructions and assessments that address the needs of each student. Include English as a Second Language wherever needed

   e. Resist labelling children in order to provide them with assistance

3. *Challenge: Focus on developing a healthy climate in which to work*

   a. Establish policies for adults at businesses or services that promote norms of non-violence, are inclusive, respectful and structured and that use mediation to resolve conflict

GOAL SIX

Community Focus: Assure a community focus to promotion/ protection/prevention efforts.

community: a group of people residing in the same region. A class or group with common interests *(Webster)*. Community can refer to a group of people connected through a set of beliefs, characteristics, common interests. It consists of individuals, institutions and associations.

1. *Challenge: Focus on building and strengthening communities*

   a. Assess community strengths and weaknesses

   b. Involve people of all cultures and socio-economic levels

   c. Establish promotion/prevention efforts for the community that builds on its strengths

   d. Begin promotion/prevention efforts with youth, families and individual citizens

   e. Develop a restitution or restorative plan for reintegration of students and community healing after a major conflict

   f. Encourage community involvement through a monthly calendar or newspaper column

Religious organizations have a major role to play around poverty, violence and parent education. There is a great potential for partnerships.

Carolyn Hendrickson
Congregations Concerned for Children

2. *Challenge: Gain momentum for promotion/prevention efforts through simultaneous efforts*

   a. Create a synergy in the community so there are simultaneous yet coordinated initiatives happening in the schools, law enforcement, medical community, judicial system, social services, arts, organized sports, parks and recreation, business, media, libraries, civic organizations, community centers, clubs, workplace, faith community, youth serving organizations, institutions, and foundations

We need to emphasize to the public:

- prevention is not pork

- we all have to take care of our children

- communities have a responsibility

Grace Harkness
Minnesota Women's Consortium

   b. Promote dialogue among students, staff, parents and citizens

   c. Encourage school staff to be active players, if not leaders, in the community's efforts to promote strengths in children and youth

   d. Identify ways the artistic, business, recreation, civic, media, religious, service, sports and recreation, and other sectors can be involved in pre- and post-school hour programming

   e. Coordinate with elders' programs for mentors and helpers, and businesses for mentors, career information, job programs and loaned executives

   f. Provide consistent, frequent and simultaneous messages from every sector of the community discouraging violent behavior and promoting positive alternatives

   g. Use community violence data to plan and evaluate promotion and prevention efforts

pro-active: taking the initiative rather than responding to problems after they occur.

3. Challenge: Clarify societal norms

a. Encourage communities to develop norms and values around non-violence and peace promotion that everyone can agree to and reinforce through their various disciplines

b. Accept responsibility for one's own behavior

c. Value non-violent conflict resolution

d. Empower and enlist community members to develop and monitor non-violence policies and procedures in schools

4. Challenge: Use at least 5% of each individual and organizations' resources on promotion/prevention of violence

a. Invest 5% of every individual's and organization's time and/or resources in promotion/prevention efforts

b. Coordinate efforts in order to learn from one another

c. Use students and peer educators out in the community to educate the public about promotion/prevention of violence

Collaborations need time and money.

Majoua Li
Department of Human Services

5. Challenge: Locate community services and schools close to each other

a. Locate services from the community in or near the school or encourage services to be part of the extended school day so that children have easy access to help

b. Explore models for truancy centers and coordinate with efforts to serve students who are homeless, drop outs, teen parents, and runaways

c. Work to maintain confidentiality but collaborate to share needed information between agencies

d. Facilitate cooperative and collaborative efforts to provide students and families with the services they need in the community

GOAL SEVEN

Social Norms: Change social norms to emphasize acceptable ways to solve problems.

1. Challenge: Stop romanticizing violence

a. Stop condoning or perpetuating the use of violence for entertainment, conflict resolution, discipline, as a sign of strength, or as a means of controlling others or expressing love

b. Create the social norm that violence is not romanticized, glamorized or tolerated as a means to solve problems

c. Promote "no tolerance" for violence

d. Gain the commitment from teachers, school staff, and students to promote non-violent relationships between each other

There is convincing evidence of a link between violence in the media and actual violence. Media glorifies and normalizes violence.

Leah Skurdahl
Turn Off The Violence

2. Challenge: Turn off the violence and work for positive programming

a. Support the "Turn Off The Violence" campaign, a community-based effort to get people to recognize the violence in the media and turn it off

b. Use the mass media to model non-violent behavior to large numbers of people

c. Begin a campaign urging audiences to think differently about violence so that it's not hip, cool or otherwise acceptable

d. Reward and celebrate non-violent heroes and heroines, attitudes and acceptable behaviors

TV has a great appeal for young people to be involved in. It's important for young people to see images of themselves change by getting people of color into the station.

Robin Hickman
KTCA Public Television

Human beings aren't intricate mechanisms whose fuel injections systems can be dispassionately adjusted by medical mechanics,... The need for contact, communication and compassion has been programmed into the functioning of the cells in our immune system, the walls of our coronary arteries, and our very will to live.

Peter Aleshire
Glendale Community College

ASSESSMENTS

This plan for the prevention of violence and promotion of assets, protective factors and strengths in children will be assessed through the monitoring of existing evaluation instruments, including:

MN Department of Education's Minnesota Student Survey
MN Department of Education's School Building Health Survey
MN Department of Education's Dangerous Weapons Incident Report
MN Department of Human Services' Substance Abuse Monitoring System
MN Department of Human Service's Incidents and Prevalence Survey
The Children's Defense Fund/Kids Count Minnesota Report

The Department of Education will also adapt the Challenges in this report to survey form, and survey schools on their violence prevention activities every two years. The Challenges list will be revised bi-annually to reflect school and community innovation.

31 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

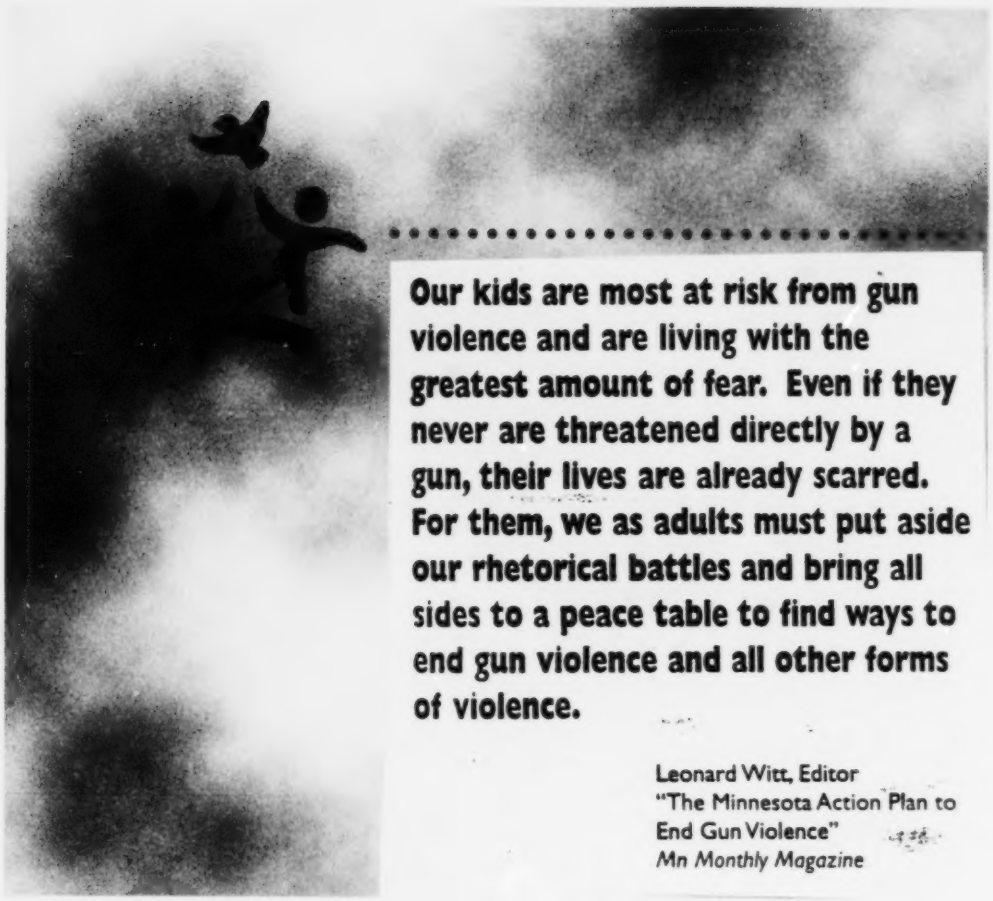
The Department of Education will collaborate with other agencies such as The Wilder Foundation, The League of Women Voters and Search Institute to compare data on the seven goals.

In addition, the Department of Education will expand the scope of its materials to include promotion concepts, provide ongoing training sessions on implementing the Goals and Challenges, and provide technical assistance to schools using this plan as a guide. Members of the Prevention and Risk Reduction Team will assess violence prevention efforts in local schools as part of its monitoring responsibility. Individual communities are encouraged to collect data locally to monitor trends in youth violence.

Through the use of these instruments, we hope to measure student, school and community behavior, and perceptions of violence and/or safety.

When our elders make decisions they need to consider how it affects the next seven generations.

Cherokee Proverb



Our kids are most at risk from gun violence and are living with the greatest amount of fear. Even if they never are threatened directly by a gun, their lives are already scarred. For them, we as adults must put aside our rhetorical battles and bring all sides to a peace table to find ways to end gun violence and all other forms of violence.

Leonard Witt, Editor
"The Minnesota Action Plan to End Gun Violence"
Mn Monthly Magazine

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMMING

During 1994 and 1995 the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) facilitated and conducted the following activities in assisting schools and communities to collaborate in violence prevention programs that promote the self-esteem and emotional and physical well being for children and families.

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Technical Assistance To Schools and Communities

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RECIPIENTS	FREQUENCY
Sample Weapons Policy	Blueprint for designing policy based on zero tolerance for weapons legislation.	Superintendents	January 1995
Weapons Report	Semi-annual report filed with MDE, data compiled and analyzed.	Commissioner of Public Safety, Legislature	Annual (First year: 1994)
MN Student Survey	Data collected from 6th, 9th, & 12th graders in all participating school districts. Survey report published.	Superintendents	Every 3 years
Technical assistance in violence prevention education	Workshops and consultation on violence prevention and causes of violence. Resource lists. Aid in implementation.	School districts and violence prevention coordinators	1994 statistics: 350 presentations and workshops to 5,000 people, 450 technical assistance calls per week.
Directions: Designs for Safe & Healthy Schools and Communities newsletter	Office of Community Collaboration newsletter on violence prevention activities.	School violence prevention coordinators, agencies and community councils	Quarterly
SafeTeam/ KMSP-TV public service programming	PSA's on peacemaking broadcast daily by KMSP-TV; SafeTeam News: a newsletter that outlines classroom and family activities for use by elementary teachers.	All elementary classroom teachers in 400 districts; students and parents who view KMSP TV programming	KMSP-TV-Daily SafeTeam Newsletter-Bi-monthly
Education Materials	Videos and violence prevention manual.	School districts and community agencies	Available Summer 1995
Monitoring and Evaluation	Monitoring of schools receiving Safe and Drug Free School funding, violence prevention education grants, and other competitive prevention grants.	School drug prevention coordinators, violence prevention coordinators, and program coordinators	On-going site visits; quarterly reports; over 100 districts monitored since September, 1994
Handling Controversy	Aid in planning for and responding to criticism about school curricula and programs related to comprehensive health issues and violence prevention.	School districts	On-going
Interagency Activities	24 task forces.	Other state and local agencies	On-going
Conferences	Assist and participate in other agencies' conferences.	School personnel and community participants	5-10 per year

The Department also grants federal and state monies for violence prevention efforts statewide.

MDE Violence Prevention Funding

GRANTS	MONEY	SOURCE OF FUNDS	RECIPIENTS
Violence Prevention Education Grants (non-competitive)	$2,450,000	MN Legislature	MN Public School Districts
Violence Prevention Council Grants (competitive)	$200,000	MN Legislature	70 local community councils
Male Responsibility Grants	$500,000	MN Legislature	School based programs
High Risk Youth Programs	$2.2 million	MN Legislature	65 school based, non-profit and other agency programs (327 programs requested $27 million in funding)
ESA Act of 1986: - Safe & Drug Free Schools Governor's Discretionary money	$1.6 million	Federal Grant	MN School Districts, non-profit organizations and agencies
ESA Act of 1986: - State Education Agency Grant	$4.6 million	Federal Grant	School Districts

In addition to grants, the MDE Office of Community Collaboration allocates federal dollars for comprehensive school health programming and HIV prevention. State entitlement such as Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) and learning readiness are dispersed to school districts, and the state funded Family Service Collaboratives are coordinated out of MDE. The overall office function is to provide statewide leadership for child and family programs, prevention and risk reduction and adult programs.

ADDITIONAL MDE VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

FAMILY SERVICE COLLABORATIVES

Family Service Collaboratives are initiatives that foster cooperation and provide grants to help communities come together to improve services for Minnesota's children and families. By providing incentives for better coordination of services, Minnesota hopes to increase the number and percentage of babies and children who are healthy, children who come to school ready to learn, families who are able to provide a healthy and stable environment for their children and children who excel in basic academic skills. Collaborative grants for implementation are designed for communities that have developed measurable goals and a comprehensive plan to improve direct services for children and families. The grants must be used to provide direct services to children and families.

In the first year of funding, 1994, 13 implementation grants were awarded totaling $2,535,000. In 1995, 49 requests amounting to almost $9,674,000 were received by the supporting state agencies that comprise the Children's Cabinet. Fifteen new implementation grants were funded, 11 of the 13 projects funded last year received second year funding and 4 of these 11 were granted expansion requests. Two projects from 1994 received an extension in their grant. Call 612/296-9729.

THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Office of Special Education is greatly concerned about the rise in violence among and against youth. While some youth with disabilities are responsible for engaging in violent activities, more often than not they are the victims of violent acts. The Office of Special Education has initiated several activities in an effort to contribute to growing efforts in this area.

A .5 FTE specialist in violence prevention, with a focus on gangs, is working with the Office of Special Education to initiate and link activities between the OSE and the Office of Community Collaboration's Violence Prevention Education programs.

Two teleconferences have been sponsored by the OSE on violence prevention issues. These include: The Safe Schools National Teleconference, a teleconference on working with youth who exhibit "Challenging Behavior."

The OSE allocates funds from various sources for grants to educational agencies for a variety of violence prevention activities. During 1994 the OSE funded a collaboration with the Office of Community Collaboration and is producing a video for distribution in childcare agencies, medical offices and community organizations that encourages vulnerable parents to seek appropriate resources for prevention and intervention services. Call 612-297-3620.

HOMELESS YOUTH PROGRAMS

5,003 Minnesota homeless children and youth were served during 1993 by local Education for Homeless Children and Youth grantees. The school district collaborations served children from the Minneapolis, Bemidji, Brooklyn Center, Duluth, Owatonna, St. Paul and Lakeville areas, and provided a wide variety of services. Homeless youth often have experienced violence during early childhood and are very vulnerable to being re-victimized or becoming perpetrators of violence. Call 612-296-4322.

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING CENTERS (ALC)

Approximately 30,000 students attend Alternative Learning Centers at 250 sites throughout the state. Many of the students completing their education in ALC's are kids who are chronically disruptive, or do not feel comfortable in mainstream settings. These schools have a lower teacher/student ratio than mainstream schools and provide programs that are designed to look at the whole child, building positive attitudes and self worth, while addressing family situations.

Among the challenges faced today at Alternative Learning Centers is the fact that dollars don't follow students, so if a youth is referred to an ALC during midyear, the school does not receive necessary funding. Nor do ALC's receive violence prevention education funds, despite the fact that many of these students come from violent homes and/or are prone to violence. There is a need for more after school programs and counselors in an attempt to prevent gang activity, drug and alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy and other problems. There is also a large need for ALC's that include boarding for students who are living in violent homes. Call 612-296-6105.

OFFICE OF EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (EEO)

The Equal Educational Opportunities (EEO) Office of the Minnesota Department of Education conducts training in awareness, prevention, intervention, and investigation of sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools. Additionally, EEO provides training in curricula for elementary and secondary students on *Sexual Harassment to Teenagers: It's Not Fun/It's Illegal;* and *Girls and Boys Getting Along: Teaching Sexual Harassment Prevention in the Elementary Classroom (K-3-4-6).* Technical assistance on this and other gender equity issues are available from EEO under a federal grant provided by Title IV Desegregation. A comprehensive list of resources on sexual harassment prevention training materials is maintained and video tapes are lent upon request to teachers and administrators. Over 3,000 educators received assistance and materials from EEO last year.

The EEO Office initiated workshops in Moorhead, Willmar and Rochester on sexual, racial, and national origin desegregation this fall attended by members of over 42 school districts. It also conducted training in the elementary sexual harassment prevention curriculum for 200 elementary school teachers and an additional training for 100 secondary school teachers and sexual assault and violence prevention teachers. Call 612-297-2792.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES INITIATIVES TEAM

The Children and Families Initiatives Team includes the following programs: Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE); Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE); Part H Interagency Early Childhood Intervention; Learning Readiness; Way to Grow; Early Childhood Screening (ECS); and Regional Interagency Systems Change. The staff provides state-wide training on early education program themes and evaluation, technical assistance and communication, family centered services, intra and interagency technical assistance and collaboration and policy development.

By ensuring a foundation of good health, positive parenting and learning readiness, these programs promote, at the earliest possible level, child and family strengths, protective factors and assets. Through coordinated services across agencies to support families and to assure that families are partners with professionals in developing interagency service plans for their children, the programs also encourage and promote prevention and the earliest possible intervention.

The overall mission of these programs is to strengthen and support all families in providing the best possible environment for the healthy growth and development of their children. Call 612-297-2441.

MINNESOTA COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE-YOUTH WORKS

The Youth Works Act passed by the 1993 Minnesota State Legislature is designed to meet a number of goals, such as promoting citizenship, building skills, meeting community needs and linking community service with education and employment. It was amended in 1994 to coordinate with the National Service Trust Act and the Federal AmeriCorps program.

To achieve these goals, the legislature established a Youth Works Task Force that was charged with developing a comprehensive plan for youth service and service-learning as well as initiating a grants program to provide full and part time service for high school graduates or youth who are working on their high school equivalency programs.

Communities that sponsor Youth Works/AmeriCorps participants will benefit from the service of young persons who will be tutors and mentors to elementary and secondary age students, conduct recreational programs, work with the elderly in maintaining their independence, rehabilitate homes and work on neighborhood environmental projects to strengthen the ties that bind communities together.

Youth Works/AmeriCorp projects are located in 17 urban, suburban and rural communities, with over 350 participants. Call 612-296-1435.

FUTURE VIOLENCE PREVENTION EFFORTS OF MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Minnesota Department of Education is dedicated to continue efforts to assist parents, schools and communities with the technical assistance necessary to create climates that aid all children in thriving and reaching their full potential. Education, the process of teaching and learning, is in and of itself a critical component for promoting protective factors, strengths and assets in children. Since comprehensive prevention is multifaceted, it is vital that we recognize the interrelationship of prevention issues and that we continue to collaborate with school districts, community councils, social services and government.

Several of the programs sponsored through the Minnesota Department of Education and funded by the Minnesota State Legislature have the potential of preventing violence in the future. It is imperative that these initiatives continue in order to help alleviate the multitude of problems we are now experiencing, and to enhance the quality of life for children, families, schools and communities. Comprehensive and longterm prevention is essential.

The combination of High Risk Youth Programs, Community Collaborative grants, Violence Prevention Education and Community Violence Prevention Council grants has given Minnesota schools and communities the opportunity to begin addressing many of the problems that contribute to the occurrence of violence. Beginning in the 1995-96 school year, the Federal legislation that was previously the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act will become the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act. As a result, schools can use these resources to provide broader based prevention efforts.

To be eligible for this funding, schools and communities will need to formulate a multi-year violence and drug prevention plan. This plan, *Unlearning Violence*, has outlined recommended goals and strategies which can serve as guidelines to schools and communities in formulating their programming. The Minnesota Department of Education will continue to monitor and provide technical assistance to school districts receiving these funds to insure compliance and enhance programming.

During the 1995-96 school year, based on appropriate financial resources, the Minnesota Department of Education is dedicated to:

A. Providing training and workshops regarding implementing broad-based, comprehensive violence prevention programs and assisting schools and communities in creating climates that allow children and families to thrive, focusing on promotion and prevention.

B. **Producing and distributing a manual to school districts on issues pertaining to violence prevention.**

C. **Sharing with schools the results of the Minnesota Student Survey which will be conducted during the Spring of 1995.**

D. **Collaborating with other agencies on conferences and technical assistance meetings throughout the state.**

F. **Providing resource lists on violence prevention trainers, videos, catalogues, books and curricula to schools, as well as a violence prevention research bibliography compiled during the formulation of this plan.**

G. **Publishing and distributing the newsletter "Directions: Designs for Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities."**

We would not even come close to meeting the growing challenge of violence in our youth without this grant. Thanks to all who work on this program!

Violence Prevention Grantee

APPENDIX

MEDIA ACTIVITY

Introduction

Most discussions on how to reduce or eliminate violence include debate about the effect of all the violence in the media. Whether violence in the media has a causative or correlative effect on violence in real life, it's quite clear the media provides a steady diet of violent images which depict violence as a normal part of life and as an acceptable way to solve problems.

One solution would be for producers to stop making shows that focus on violence. Another is to get people to stop watching the violence. Turn Off The Violence is such an initiative that started in Minnesota and is now nationwide. Its focus is to get viewers to recognize the violence and turn it off. It seems to be easier to influence people to stop watching than to get television directors and producers not to produce. Violence still makes money.

Since media is a powerful tool and an effective way to reach large numbers of people, we are proposing a plan to get key promotion/prevention messages out through proactive, positive uses of the media. For example, The SafeTeam Program, a collaboration between prevention educators Katia and Steve Petersen, MDE and KMSP-TV, provides public service announcements and family specials on peacemaking and conflict resolution, along with classroom activities through the SafeTeam News, distributed to all Minnesota schools.

The following is a brief description of a media campaign. Concurrent to the writing of this report, other state agencies and private organizations are proposing related media plans. It makes sense to combine efforts and determine how to best lead such a campaign. MDE staff will keep track of the progress of other initiatives, identify ways to collaborate and support such efforts.

Description

Goal: To create and execute a media campaign

Strategies: To work with an advertising and/or public relations agency, the Minnesota Broadcasters Association and a media task force to plan and implement a media campaign. The campaign would be a 3-5 year effort, promoting key messages of positive cultural norms and helping provide focus for communities by highlighting existing successful efforts to reduce and eliminate violence through recognizable, respected leaders as well as involved citizens.

General Messages:

- Violence is not an acceptable way to solve problems, get control, assert power, get what we need or be entertained (It's not hip, cool, normal, the way it is, it's not romantic, it's not sexy, it shouldn't be entertaining, it's not a sign of strength)
- Inclusive definition of violence
- Various social problems are interconnected
- Learn to resolve conflict peacefully
- See it, name it, speak up, speak out, take action
- Children need to be nurtured, protected and to be children
- Adults need to act like adults
- Everyone has a part to play
- 5% of everyone's resources should be given to promotion and prevention activities
- Be a Peace Maker
- Help people move beyond the fear and do something about violence

- Treat others as you want to be treated
- Dare to Care about others (respect, dignity, equality, care, responsibility)
- It's Your Mind - We're each responsible for our behavior and the choices we make
- Turn Off The Violence and Turn on Alternatives
- Choose Weapons of Construction, Not Destruction
- A resource telephone line for promotion/prevention activities

MDE will:

- create educational materials/tools that can be used in local communities in their media efforts
- provide technical assistance for the campaign
- develop a referral base for services that may be requested as a result of the campaign
- support other efforts to Turn Off The Violence and Turn On Alternatives

We Will Be Successful When:

- key phrases are commonly known
- attitudes about the acceptability of violence begin to shift
- people want to and know how to get involved
- people call an identified resource line—for more information and referral
- when rates of youth violence are decreasing yearly

COMMUNITY MODELS

Many communities throughout Minnesota are involved in comprehensive efforts to promote positive development of children, youth and families as well as efforts to eliminate violence. Several of these initiatives are inspired by existing models which were adapted for local communities. The following are brief descriptions of the main factors each model cites for successful implementation of promotion/prevention efforts.

Center for Reducing Rural Violence

In January 1995 the Center for Reducing Rural Violence (CRRV) began operation, under the direction of Don Streufert, and funded by the Blandin Foundation. The Center, located in Grand Rapids, is being administered by the Citizens Council, a Minneapolis-based group with 37 years of experience providing programs in the area of violence prevention and crime and justice.

CRRV has four primary goals:

1. Specified violent activities identified and prioritized by communities will be decreased.
2. Community skills, knowledge and resources to raise non-violent children will be increased. Children will recognize the existence and the unacceptability of violence.
3. The harmful consequences of violence on individuals and communities will be decreased (restorative justice).
4. Decision and policy makers' awareness of the causes and consequences of violence to rural communities will be increased.

This initiative grew out of the Pathways to Peace Safety Program, and will provide assistance to rural communities in Minnesota. Contact Dr. Donald E. Streufert, 218-326-0523.

The Initiative for Violence-Free Families and Communities in Ramsey County

Ramsey County Initiative is a five-year community collaboration based on the vision of ending family and community violence in Ramsey County. The Initiative developed a model of eleven Action Teams that now involve over 500 volunteers and more than 100 organizations. The teams focused on areas such as: workplace, media, child abuse, education, faith communities and gun violence. Their work led to a model policy for non-violence in the workplace, numerous educational materials, and an effective method of getting people involved and generating materials, awareness and action. Ramsey County has paved the way for a model of training city/county employees on violence and its prevention. Contact Shirley Pierce, 612-266-2404.

Children First/Search Institute

Begun in 1992, the St. Louis Park's Children First is a prototype community wide initiative developed locally and is based on Search Institute's research on adolescents' resiliency. The initiative focuses on all children birth to age 21, seeks to unite the community around a shared framework and vision, and is designed to stimulate simultaneous and coordinated change in all sectors of the community.

The model represents a shift from a focus on problems (deficits) to the pursuit of the positive building-blocks of child and adolescent development (assets). This approach is based on Search's research with adolescents which identified 30 developmental assets, both internal and external. The assets are additive and cumulative and at least 25 are needed for positive youth development. Yet after surveying over 300,000 youth between sixth and twelve grade, Search Institute found that the average young person has 16.3 assets. It's clear that the more assets a child has, the less problems or risk behaviors s/he has.

Supported by both local and national research, Children First has clear preferred outcomes and built in evaluation mechanisms. Contact Karen Atkinson, Children First, (612) 928-6001, or Dr. Peter Benson, Search Institute, 612-376-8955 or 1-800-888-3820.

Turn Off the Violence

Turn Off the Violence is a national, community-based awareness campaign educating and empowering individuals to choose nonviolent entertainment and nonviolent responses to conflict. Each year individuals and communities celebrate Turn Off the Violence Day, the second Thursday of October, to highlight violence-free activities as alternatives to violent entertainment.

Volunteer educators have compiled the Education Idea Guide, a curriculum for use in grades K-12, with lesson plans on conflict resolution, anger control, respect and media literacy. A Community Action Guide offers easy-to-use activity ideas, reproducible handouts and sample letters for individuals or community partnerships to celebrate Turn Off the Violence one day or all year round. Reproducible brochures are available in English, Hmong, Lao, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Volunteers provide the campaign's momentum. Participation is welcome. For more information, call Leah Skurdahl at 612-593-8041.

SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION EFFORTS

Some of the programs implemented with Violence Prevention Education Funds included:

Bagley School District #162 Contact - Jean Bratvold, 218-694-3120

Since 1984, Bagley High School has had a peer educational theater program which presents a play to elementary students on child sexual abuse prevention. In addition, several other peer education programs involving 10% of the high school population are in operation. They include: peer mediators, companions for EBD students, meeters and greeters for students new to the high school, HIV/AIDS peer educators, a community service group and an environmental service group.

Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District #191 Contact - Ted Melloh, 612-895-7204

Among the activities conducted in the Burnsville-Eagan-Savage Public Schools in 1993-94 included: a concerted effort to train parents, staff, school board members, the AAUW, church members, students and community organizations on conflict management and violence prevention; a video, DEVELOPING CHARACTER AND BUILDING WINNERS, was produced by students for use by coaches; CLIMB and Illusion Theaters were brought in to put on performances for students; Second Step curriculum was implemented in the district's elementary schools and students took an active part in the planning of violence prevention education activities.

Minneapolis Public School Special District #1 Contact - Kathy Anlauf, 612-627-2234

Newer initiatives include a plan to begin comprehensive promotion/prevention efforts at six sites. The emphasis will be on dialogue between students, staff, parents and community members so sites can identify what's needed most from a "Menu of Ideas." Special projects in '95-'96 include: Expansion of "Hip Deep" (students and staff work with professionals in the entertainment industry to develop a radio show); Anderson Lab School (disseminate diversity training models); support and continue to assess peer mediation and conflict resolution programs and Touch Guidelines (design and implement a program to clarify issues around appropriate touch in school systems).

Mounds View School District #621 Contact - Carol Seidenkranz, 612-639-6226

Violence prevention started out in the late 70's with consistent efforts to educate students about physical and sexual abuse prevention. The district initiated an on-going collaboration between 4 north suburban districts: North St. Paul/Maplewood, White Bear Lake, Roseville and Mounds View to share ideas and services. In addition, the Youth Services Coordinator has been successful in fundraising for everything from educational plays to social worker positions. The range of activities for violence prevention include student created and performed prevention plays, support groups, networking with other community agencies, staff inservices, parent education, community events and professional theatrical performances and curriculum development, including an elementary level infusion curriculum, "Something Special" which includes violence, sexual harassment and drug\alcohol prevention with communication and conflict resolution skills.

North St. Paul\Maplewood School District #622 Contact - Elaine Johnson, 612-770-4759

The district has focused on two major areas: school climate and mediation. School climate is addressed though respect, cooperation and community. The middle school inservices have focused on language and its power with students. Plays were presented to students and staff and inservices to staff on interpersonal violence prevention and bullying through out the entire district.

St. Paul School District #625 Contact - Mary Ann Reilly - 612-293-8757

The St. Paul Schools is engaged in a variety of violence prevention efforts throughout the

system. On-going initiatives include: Cool 2B Safe (a school violence reduction project partnership between the St. Paul Public Schools and The Wilder Foundation); Safe & Caring Schools (a team approach program of prevention training and follow-up interventions for K-6 teachers and school counselors); Enhancing Student Well-Being (K-6 anti-violence program) peer mediation, Peace Sites, and development guidance activities.

Sleepy Eye School District #84 Contact - Jessica Wachholz, 507-794-7906

Among the activities conducted in the Sleepy Eye Public Schools in 1993-94 included: student Safety Team skits performed by students in grades 8-12 for elementary students; collaboration between Sleepy Eye High School and St. Mary's High School to produce and present a play, DIVERSE CITY, on differences, prejudice and discrimination; Hispanic Student Visitors, a program presented by Hispanic peer educators who visit classrooms to discuss culture and diversity issues; speakers on sexual assault; and the purchase of violence prevention videos and books for the resource library.

SW/WC Educational Cooperative Service Unit, Marshall, MN Contact - June Nichols, 507-537-1481

A "Parent Information Hot Line" was set up for parents, school personnel and community members in order to help children get information on services available to children in the Southwest/West Central Minnesota area. Other activities included the training of 355 youth and adults in conflict resolution, peer mediation, as well as conducting staff inservices on these programs. The play TOUCH was presented to elementary students. All violence activities were covered by the local press in order to facilitate community involvement.

White Bear Lake School District # 624 Contact - Lyle Hedke, 612-773-6101

The White Bear Lake Prevention and Risk Reduction team is a 26 member inter-disciplinary committee that has developed a district wide plan for prevention. They identified the schools' most compelling needs - prevention/education; early identification, intervention and referral; and support services. The plan's activities included revising the PK-12 prevention curricula to risk reduction and protective factors, improving school climate, conflict resolution training for students, staff and administrators, and collaborations between schools, agencies and the community. Exemplary programs include FACES (Friends & Actors Changing Education and Society), a 9-12 peer teaching theater group; AIDS & DARE Peer educators; Adventure Bound, a service learning program where 11th and 12th graders work in an extended day program with elementary children; and cross-age tutoring.

Among the community councils funded were:

Hibbing High School District #701 Contact - Margaret A. Ratai, 218-735-8644

Sponsored a community awareness program on services available to families and victims of crime, violence prevention programs and non-violent activities. High school students made violence prevention posters that were put on display during National Education Week and at the parent open house. Second grade students prepared a "Hands are Not for Hitting" display. Violence prevention program information was sent to area churches for inclusion in their sermons and weekly bulletins. Faculty used the "Turn Off the Violence" Educators Guide in activities in the elementary and high schools.

Rochester School District #535 Contact - Pat Mohn, 507-285-8595

In addition to peer mediation training, sexual abuse prevention plays, a sexual harassment curriculum and prejudice reduction workshops and plays for staff and students in the district's schools, the district helped to form CIVIC, a 40 member organization of public and private agencies that plan and coordinate community youth violence prevention efforts. CIVIC's efforts include a community youth mentorship program, a gang prevention and intervention initiative (which includes a day long conference, a team of 6 professionals who do presentations around the area on gangs, Gang Resistance and Training Education curriculum, and a parents' support group), and a county-wide zero tolerance for gangs and violence. The zero tolerance policy calls for immediate removal of graffiti, strictest penalty for juvenile offenders, a citizen's watch and school expulsion enforcement.

At-Risk Youth grants included:

Pine Point Ind. School District #25 Contact - Diane Lehse, 218-573-3550

This K-8 school is located on the White Earth Indian Reservation. This is a expansion of school efforts to prevent, decrease or intervene in violence and related high-risk behaviors of youth, while providing education on self-esteem, conflict resolution, violence prevention and prevention of harassment. A Mental Health/Family Specialist will work with children, their families, and school staff to provide counseling, education and staff training. Parent/guardians and community members will be involved in the project as well.

Minnesota Extension Service - Goodhue County Contact - Kathleen Olson, 612-385-3111

"KIDS - Handle with Care" is a county-wide project designed to help reverse the societal acceptance of physical punishment by teaching alternative discipline styles through public awareness and parent education. Youth will learn to utilize positive methods of effectively managing conflict without violence.

Robbinsdale Ind. School District #281 Contact - Tom Henderlite, 612-545-2571

Instituted the project, Suspended Off The Streets (SOS), for middle school students, grades 6-8, who are suspended out of school. The SOS coordinator will supervise these students in the community where they will perform work or social services for the duration of their suspension. SOS will eliminate suspended students who spend their days at home unsupervised, loitering the community or end up with police contact due to illegal activity. Carl Sandbury Middle School serves youth from Golden Valley, New Hope, Crystal and Robbinsdale.

The following are among the Planning and Implementation projects that have resulted from the collaborative grants:

St. Croix Area United Way, Inc. Contact - J. C. Pfeiffer, 612-439-3838

St. Croix Area United Way in collaboration with Stillwater School District 834, Washington County Health Environment and Land Management Department and Washington County Community Services Department has developed a "village" collaborative that seeks to mobilize community support and resources around key transitions in the lives of children and their families. The village process begins with a personal invitation being extended to families and children to identify areas and concerns they perceive as important and to determine desired outcomes. Participants work as partners using common concepts and language. The process uses positive modeling. Learning is celebrated. The "village" collaborative approach is unique in that it includes all children and families.

Waseca Public Schools District #829 Contact - Marilyn Koprowski, 507-835-2222

The Waseca County Collaborative for Families is made up of parents, clergy, and representatives of education, social and health services, law enforcement, private industry and a nonprofit foundation. The collaborative has two goals and two plans of action. The goals are to improve the health, development and well-being of babies and their families during both the prenatal and postnatal periods and to support all families in raising their children to be successful and contributing members of the community. To accomplish these goals, the collaborative plans a home visitation education and support program for all pregnant women and families with infants to ensure healthy bonding and development up to enrollment in kindergarten. The second plan of action is to provide counseling and family services coordination for students and their families both in school and at home.

LAWS RELATING TO VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

(as of March, 1995)

STATE LAWS

Definition of Dangerous Weapon
Minnesota Statute 609.02, subd. 6
Explains what legally is known as a dangerous weapon

Gun Free and Drug Free School Zones
Minnesota Statutes 152.01 to 152.024 and 609.66, subds. 1 and 1a
Defines school zone and legal penalties for certain dangerous weapon and drug crimes

Possession of Dangerous Weapons on School Property
Minnesota Statute 609.66, subd. 1d
Explains the elements of crime, definition of school property, legal penalties and people and activities excluded from coverage of this offense

Reports of Dangerous Weapons Incidents on School Property
Minnesota Statute 121.207
Explains schools' reporting requirements for dangerous weapons' incidents

Trespass in a School Building
Minnesota Statute 609.605, subd. 4
Explains elements of crime, exceptions, penalty and manner of detention and/or arrest

Use of Force by or Against Teachers and Other School Officials
Minnesota Statute 609.2231, subd. 5; 609.06; 609.065; 127.45; and 127.03, subd. 3
Defines use of force against teachers. Defines use of force by teachers and their civil and criminal liability. Defines prohibitions of corporal punishment.

School Harassment and Violence Policy
Minnesota Statute 127.46 and 127.455
Explains schools' policy requirements regarding sexual, religious and racial harassment and violence.

Violence Prevention Education Programs
Minnesota Statute 126.77 and 126.78
Defines violence prevention programs and encourages their integration into curricula.

FEDERAL LAWS

Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities
Improving America's Schools Act of 1994
Public Law 103-382, Title IV
Sec. 4001 through 4004
Details the Congressional findings that led to the law, its purpose and national funding amounts.

Part A-Sec. 4011 through 4116
Provides detailed information about state grants for drug and violence prevention programs, including requirements for funding, authorized activities and arrangements with local agencies and organizations.

Gun Free School Act of 1994
Title IV, Part F, Sec. 14601-14603
Provides federal definition of weapon, policy and reporting requirements for schools to receive funding.

Gun Free School Zone Act, 1994
Public Law 103-322, Title 18, Chapter 44, sec. 921-922
Provides detailed definition of firearms, unlawful acts with firearms and exclusions.

ADDENDUM

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Department of Education has additional materials to support promotion/prevention efforts. Call the Prevention and Risk Reduction Team, 612-296-5825, for copies of the following:

Dangerous Weapons Incident Report in Minnesota Schools: A summary of the reported use of weapons by students from the school districts in the state.

Educational Resources for Violence Prevention: A list of current curricula, books/articles and videos on violence prevention education.

Violence Prevention Classroom Materials: A bibliography containing resources drawn from violence prevention curricula, violence and peacemaking literature, staff development material, family resources and multi-cultural stories and music.

Violence Prevention Catalogues: A list of catalogues of violence prevention resources and the companies that produce them; includes addresses and phone numbers.

Violence Prevention Videos: A list of educational videos on violence prevention topics, including conflict resolution, anger management, and general violence prevention awareness for K-12 audiences.

Violence Prevention Resource Lists: Consultants and Agencies that provide prevention and promotion education; includes theater companies, social service agencies, educational companies and individuals.

Sample Violence Prevention Policy: Recommendations for local education systems considering policies that address violence prevention and weapons.

A Summary of Promotion/Prevention Research: An outline of the main points from the current research related to violence prevention and the promotion of positive youth development.

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